



COLLABORATIVE DISCIPLESHIP

2 Cultivate

Sexual Purity

1 Connect

Summary God can give us what we need to be satisfied in Him and live sexually pure lives.

Read 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 and ask the following questions:

- 1 What do you like about this passage?
- 2 What do you find uncomfortable or difficult to understand in this passage?
- 3 What appears to be the main idea emphasized in this passage? (Look for repeated words or ideas.)

Consider how the following passages increase our understanding of this topic:

A Read Proverbs 5:15-23

- 1 What is God's plan for sexual fulfillment?

B Read Matthew 5:27-28

- 1 How does Jesus expand the traditional understanding of adultery?
- 2 How has lust, sex and pornography affected your life?

C Read Galatians 5:16-26

- 1 How can we keep from sexual immorality and sin?

- 4 What are the beliefs and values promoted in these passages?
- 5 What do they reveal about our human condition and God's response?
- 6 How are these beliefs and values similar or different from those that have influenced you? (such as your family, culture, peers, church, etc.)
- 7 What unanswered questions do you have about sexual purity?
- 8 How might our faith increase and our lives change as we embrace what is true and important?
- 9 In light of what we've discussed, how can we pray for each other right now?

Note For many sexual purity is a struggle and some have experienced trauma related to their sexuality. If your group doesn't have the experience and resources necessary to help in this area, please connect with a Cru staff member, pastor or professional Christian counselor.

Did your parents ever have "the talk" with you about sex or sexual purity? If so, what did they tell you? If not, where did you first learn about sex and what did you learn?

3 Care

Since we last met, what happened as a result of expressing Christ's love to others?

How can you, or we, express Christ's love to others this week?

Here are a few ideas:

Pray God would meet their deepest needs.

Help meet a felt need they have.

Encourage them with a text, note or verbally.

Give them a thoughtful gift or buy them coffee.

Invite them to do something fun or meaningful.

Listen to their story.

Explore their thoughts on the gospel.

Four Corners of Sexual Wholeness

This document is meant to be used in discussion with another person. At the bottom of this document there are general questions for discussion. There are also specific questions for discussion under each section along with potential resources that you could pass on to help a person grow in that particular area.

In Cru we're about introducing people to Jesus, helping them grow in their faith, and sending them to introduce others to Jesus. Growing in our faith involves submitting every area of our life, including our sexuality, increasingly under the Lordship of Christ. Sexuality is an aspect of God's design for all people, created for our good and for His glory. Like every other area of our lives, our sexuality has been distorted by sin. We have all been affected by our culture, our own sinful choices and the ways that others have acted sinfully towards us. This leads to confusion and the temptation to believe, think, and act in ways contrary to God's plan. Yet God intends for the redemption of our sexuality and wholeness for each of us.

- What are some ways that you think our views of sexuality may have diverged from what God intends?

Redemption of our sexuality occurs as we apply the Gospel to this area of our lives. Our journey towards sexual wholeness will be one of applying both grace and truth, over time, in the context of community. Through trusting Jesus we are forgiven from the penalty of sin, and through the work of the Holy Spirit we are being freed from the power that sin has in our lives.

In sexuality, as in all other areas of our lives, the goal of a follower of Christ is to strive towards Christ-likeness (2 Cor 3:18), not just to manage our behavior. This happens as we surrender our hearts and behavior, through the power of the Holy Spirit. A person pursuing sexual wholeness intentionally seeks to reflect God's design for sexuality in four distinct yet connected aspects: by developing Biblical convictions about sex; through increased self-awareness; in intentional practices; and within a supportive community. We call these four areas the Four Corners of Sexual Wholeness.

Biblical Convictions

The primary means of understanding God's plan for our good regarding sexuality comes through studying what the Bible says about sex. Concisely, this includes:

that God created humans as male and female to reflect his image (Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1-2); that sexual intimacy is designed to be expressed solely in the context of a lifelong covenant relationship between one man and one woman (Gen. 2:18-25; Matt. 19:4-6; Mark 10:6-8; Eph. 5:31); and that sexual activity within this context is affirmed as a gift of God (Song of Solomon, Heb. 13:4; 1 Tim. 4:3) intended to be enjoyed for connection, pleasure, and procreation to the glory of God (Gen. 2:18-25; 1 Cor. 7:1-5; Col. 3:17). Growing in agreement with God's plan is the first corner in our journey towards sexual wholeness.

- Have you ever considered that the Bible might have something to say about your sex life?
- How would you self-assess whether or not your thoughts and convictions about sex line up with what God says about it?

Self-Awareness

The second corner of growth towards sexual wholeness is self-awareness. We each need to be aware of the ways in which our brokenness affects our sexuality, including understanding the ways we're tempted and some of the deeper reasons for those temptations. Every person faces some degree of sexual temptation to act outside of God's plan. It's our response to temptation that determines our personal responsibility and guilt, not the presence of temptation itself (Jam. 1:13-15; Heb. 4:15).

Healthy self-awareness of brokenness is an honesty with ourselves and agreement with God about our sin. The person who is growing in awareness will not merely acknowledge their specific sins but also be growing in sensitivity to the roots of their sin. The roots might include but aren't limited to: wrong core beliefs about God and self, wounds from others, traumatic experiences, and our cultural influences. Understanding the situations and reasons behind our temptations toward sexual sin will help us take practical steps towards being "transformed by the renewing of our minds" (Romans 12:2) and will lead to greater freedom and Christ-likeness.

- Have you ever thought about if there are patterns or places where you are regularly tempted to sin?
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- If you had a problem with self-awareness how would you know?

Intentional Practices

Hebrews 12:12-13 exhorts us in the fight against sin, saying, “Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. Make level paths for your feet, so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.” The third corner of growing towards sexual wholeness is engaging in the intentional practices that make a level path. If you think about making a level path, sometimes there will be rocks you need to remove and at other times dirt will need to be added.

In the same way, we each need to be intentional about avoiding certain behaviors or situations and pursuing healthy behaviors and situations. A rock to remove could be taking the internet off of your phone, or spending isolated time with your boyfriend/girlfriend. Dirt to add could include exercise, an accountability group, or journaling. The best practices for each of us will flow from the ways we’re growing in self-awareness of how we’re specifically tempted, from the wisdom of our supportive community, and through time with the Lord in prayer.

- What are the next best steps for you to “make level paths for your feet?”
- How can you appropriate limit access to the areas where you are most tempted right now?
- Is there anyone that you should let know about your steps or that you need help from to make some level paths for your feet?

Supportive Community

Sexual wholeness cannot be successfully maintained in isolation. Therefore, the fourth corner of our growth is a supportive community that encourages and reminds us of the other three corners. All of us need both peers as well as mentors to be a part of our supportive community.

The form each of our supportive communities takes will be different based on how the previously mentioned corners relate to our struggle, but it will be a community of truth and grace that reminds us of the Gospel. Specifically, it will remind us of the seriousness of our sin, the radical acceptance and unconditional love of Christ, the new identity we have in Christ, and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to bring about change. In some cases, we may need to seek

professional counseling or a focused support group to be a part of our community as well.

- Have you ever been a part of a community where you felt totally accepted even though they knew about the worst parts of you?
- What people make up your supporting community?
- Who could you ask to be a part of your community in this struggle?
- Does this community live out of both grace (total acceptance) and truth (convictions about right and wrong)?
- Do you have both mentors and peers in this group of people?

Christ’s Transforming Power

This is the foundation of the four corners. God is at work in the world as well as in our lives. The Bible says he is faithful and will complete his work within us (Phil 1:6). As such when we begin start trying to grow in sexual wholeness we get the pleasure of partnering with him in our own transformation! We shouldn’t see our effort that we put into growing in sexual wholeness as something we can do on our own or something that we came up with. It’s something God has already been working on and he wants to invite us to live into his design for our lives. As such we must depend on his empowering presence in our live to experience freedom and growth.

Developed by the Sexual Wholeness Direction Team, 2019

Making a Plan

<p>Biblical Convictions</p> <p>What I hope to accomplish</p> <p>What I will do</p> <p>Who will help me</p>	<p>Self Awareness</p> <p>What I hope to accomplish</p> <p>What I will do</p> <p>Who will help me</p>
<p>Intentional Practices</p> <p>What I hope to accomplish</p> <p>What I will do</p> <p>Who will help me</p>	<p>Supportive Community</p> <p>What I hope to accomplish</p> <p>What I will do</p> <p>Who will help me</p>

Christ's Transforming Power

Freedom will remain unattainable without the power of Christ intimately transforming our lives.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Sexuality- general

Healinghiddenwounds.com

Beggarsdaughter.com

Cru.org (tons of articles and resources)

Desiringgod.org (look for sexual purity under the “topics” tab)

Sex and the City Uncovered: Exposing the Emptiness and Healing the Hurt, Marian Jordan

Fantasy, Betty Churchill

Dating

Boundaries in Dating: How Healthy Choices Grow Healthy Relationships, Henry Cloud

Emotional Purity: An Affair of the Heart, Heather Arnel Paulsen

I Am a Tool: To Help With Your Dating Life, Shelby Abbott

Dating During the Apocalypse and Other Conversations on God, Sex, and Life; A.J. Marks and Katherine James

Pornography

Covenanteyes.com

Fightthenewdrug.org

Flesh, Rich James

Finally Free, Heath Lambert

Sexual Abuse

On the Threshold of Hope, Diane Langberg

If you are looking for a resource on a topic not covered here please ask staff! There are TONS of resources out there.